

Meeting of the
Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council
The Chateau Hotel – 1621 Jumer Drive, Bloomington, Illinois
September 20, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
APPROVED MINUTES

SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT	SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT	GUESTS	STAFF continued
Gladys Boyd	Katy Cotts	Claudia Dancy Davis	Geneva Byrd
Arrelda Hall	Ken Keefe	Jessica Janicki	MaryBeth Corrigan
Rachel Hoyt	Kate Monte	Stevie Knoblauch	Barb Crandall
Harriet Kersh	Rachel Pruess	Maria Leavengood	Carlene Erno
Maya Maclin	Samella Taylor-Lewis	Jordan Linson	Gwenn Eyer
Susan McConnell	Stephanie Tesreau	Patricia Pride	Jen Florent
Kellye Norris		Elizabeth Richmond	Michelle Grove
Mary Savage			Maria Miller
Carol Sheley		STAFF	Stacy Mixon-Newton
		Julie Barbosa	Jose Oropezza
		Nathan Bassett	Stefanie Polacheck
		Holly Bitner Duck	Doug Washington
		Therese Burton	Pam Winsel

Welcome and Introductions

Carol Sheley

SWFCAC Chairperson Carol Sheley welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:11 a.m. and council members and guests introduced themselves.

Final Report to the Director

Carol Sheley

There were no final reports to the Director. The monthly Director's Report was submitted as required by law.

Approve SWFCAC Minutes from 7/12/19

Maya Maclin made the motion to approve the minutes from the July 12, 2019 SWFCAC meeting. Harriet Kersh seconded, and the motion carried.

Central Region Welcome and Report

Maria Miller, RA

Maria officially welcomed the council and guests to Bloomington. She is the Regional Administrator and has been in that position since January. She has been with the Department for 34 years and has served in various capacities. Maria stated that she was honored to be with the council and commended the council for their commitment for serving children and families. She said that without collaboration we can do little, but together we can really see great accomplishments. She said the council work, the council committee work, and representation

outside the council is very important. She noted that we are at a time in this organization where we must collaborate, and leadership is working in a positive direction to change the narrative of our work in child welfare. She said that Director Smith and others are very committed to the work. The Regional Administrators meet by phone every morning to communicate, share information and collaborate. She said that there is a lot of leadership and good thinking in this group and she looks forward to being engaged with the council.

Resource and Recruitment

Therese Burton

Resource and Recruitment has recently moved from Operations to Monitoring. Therese reported that she will be working in that area. Council member Susan McConnell stated that Let it Be Us has received a very large grant to be used for coaching and would like to collaborate with the Department. They will initially focus on Cook and Northern regions where they are currently serving 503 families. They will follow up.

Legislative Report

Gwenn Eyer

Gwenn stated that Meaghan Jorgensen from the DCFS Legislative office recently reported at an Illinois Adoption Advisory Council meeting, noting that everything that was presented to the councils in the prior meeting has been signed by the Governor. Legislative reports will be on hold until they are back in session.

Managed Care Organization

Rachel Hoyt

Rachel is a Clinical Manager on the IlliniCare Medical Management Team. She welcomed audience member Pam Winsel from Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) before giving an overview of IlliniCare. Many staff have been attending Town Hall meetings and they have been gathering information.

IlliniCare has been in managed care since 2011. Other states have already hosted IlliniCare programs for youth involved in the child welfare system. Illinois foster and former foster youth will be joining the plan on November 1st. IlliniCare is partnering with HFS, the statewide Medicaid agency, and DCFS. Their goal is to help adapt the Medicaid world to the child welfare system, partnering with caseworkers, foster/adoptive families, GAL's, etc. They currently have 942 employees serving 351,582 members in Illinois. They will operate statewide participation in all Medicaid Managed Care products in Illinois. They will work with DCFS to provide improved access to appropriate care, improved coordination of services and improved functional outcomes.

They will bring in many programs as part of the child welfare team. If caregivers call their physicians and other providers and hear that they are not currently providers, they may need to follow up. Pam reported that they are reaching out to obtain new providers. HFS will accept providers who will serve only foster children as opposed to serving the general population. They don't want caregivers to have to wait months for new providers because familiar providers are not in network. They recognize that our children have many needs and families need support in meeting those needs. Case management staff are assigned to each region. Key provisions include care coordination, training, community partnerships and overseeing psychotropic medication, and working with Healthworks. Each youth will have a care coordinator trained in viewing needs through the trauma lens. Rachel provided detailed descriptions of the various YouthCare Positions provided by IlliniCare. The Rapid Response Team will be assigned to last-minute

issues that come up, i.e., a foster child is scheduled for surgery and caregivers just found out that the surgeon is not in-network.

IlliniCare will go live on November 1, 2019. Caregivers need to respond to a recent mailing if they wish to opt out of IlliniCare and go with another provider. If caregivers go with IlliniCare they will have until November to change to another provider. Managed Care rolled out in 2011. They now offer five MCO's statewide, with two additional in Cook County. Healthworks will provide interim case management and will contract with IlliniCare for lead agency oversight.

Children and youth will still have the comprehensive health screening when they come into care and will be assigned to low, medium, high and complex levels of care. Specialized programs will include promoting Adoption Success, Adolescence to Adulthood, and LGBTQ services. Behavioral health services like residential/ group homes will transition to IlliniCare. Doctors will know that future authorizations need to go to IlliniCare. Pam noted that the prompt payment is a great advantage for IlliniCare. There is a process to use if something is denied. Rachel said that IlliniCare leadership is very passionate about serving DCFS youth. All behavioral health and medical provisions in the service plan, integrated assessment, court-ordered, etc., will be in the care plan. There are certain diagnoses that qualify for services above and beyond standard Medicaid services. Medicaid has a 90-day continuity of care program. Welcome packets will be distributed, and the web site will be updated.

Contacts:

Margarite Childress re: provider contracts. Margarita.Childress@illinicare.com

Tracy Johnson, Theresa.R.Johnson@illinicare.com

Lamont Boswell, LBoswell@illinicare.com

DISCUSSION:

- How do youth transition from hospitals? What if they need medication? The rule is that they'll have appointments within seven days of discharge. The care coordinator will be responsible for moving things forward.
- What all is covered? Physical health, behavioral health, pharmacy, and vision.
- Are they reaching out to past providers? They read Medicaid claims from 2017 and 2018 and are reaching out to those providers. They will go back even further in the future. If a provider is needed IlliniCare can enter a single case agreement.
- Can people use out of state providers? IlliniCare has entered agreements with places like Children's and Barnes in St. Louis.
- Please post the contact numbers on the D-net and DCFS external website.
- Will co-pays ever be required? No.
- Will you train/present at support groups throughout the state? Yes.
- If my child is currently covered and I like the managed care coverage can I remove my child from private insurance? Yes, at any time.
- How will the health risk screening occur? It will occur over the phone within 30 days.
- How will the Adoption Success program work with Post Adoption Support Services? Care coordination will help link to services, ensuring that you can get into a program.
- Psychotropic medications will still be managed through UIC.

Daycare

Doug Washington and Steve Bradford

Doug's role is Acting Deputy Director of Contract Administration, responsible for day care licensing in collaboration with the regional offices. He introduced other staff present including Holly Bitner Duck, contract administration; Jose Oropezza, Cook County administrator and Stacy Mixon Newton who oversees the Office of Child Development and day care services in Cook County.

Doug noted that there will be changes within the Department, i.e. Managed Care and Family First prevention services. They do not anticipate changes to day care eligibility. They are looking at full funding going into FY'21. FY'20 funds are in place for current providers. They have seen progress regarding utilization of day care services without the state. They are addressing day care in reunified families and intact families by providing support for six months.

There will be licensed day care centers, licensed day care providers, etc. Entities don't have to be licensed to provide day care when they are license exempt. This may include childcare programs attached to a school, YMCA, etc. Stacy noted that they also serve the teen parenting program. Unlicensed day cares will undergo stronger scrutiny. With the new process working closely with HFS they can maintain placement in day care. They have a smoother transition for children leaving DCFS and going to a home not involved with DCFS. Protective day care is provided for six months when children return home and may be extended for six more months.

Discussion:

- A stay-at-home mom for other children has a foster child that was referred to day care by therapist, but she cannot get coverage since she is not employed. Are there exceptions? The Department can make exceptions, because the agency recognizes that early childhood education is important. Erickson Institute oversees the day care program and they have expressed the same concern.
- Who should foster parents contact when they need to request exceptions? MaryBeth Corrigan is the Statewide Administrator of the School Readiness program and will be able to help identify programs using regional representatives. Holly stated that clinical reports will be reviewed, and decisions will be made.
- Changing the daycare age limit from three to six for families moving to adoption is still a work in progress.
- The delay in licensing and payment is being addressed by training staff to complete the application completely and correctly the first time. Stacy recognized the issue and has asked to be included in Email chains whenever there is a hold up. She also has asked RA's to invite her to regional meetings to address this issue.
- Providers are paid for August after the end of the month when they submit their attendance record. There is a slight delay at the end of the fiscal year.
- Re-determinations happen every six months. Is it possible to have the foster parent pre-approved as that date approaches? It may not happen in this fiscal year, but Doug is working on things on the back end to move this process along.
- We are going to lose foster parents if we don't offer timely day care services for them.
- If there's a delay in payment contact Doug's staff for attention to the situation.
- When there are problems with daycare paperwork the local Foster Parent Support Specialist could be copied to help follow up.

- How do you manage the barrier of utilizing unlicensed providers when the process is becoming stricter? They require that unlicensed unrelated day care providers pass background checks. They ask on the application the date the information was sent in to have the background check run.
- The information from the foster parent and the information about the unlicensed unrelated provider should be submitted to a worker to let them know your plan for daycare.
- Utilize the FPSS for critical situations.
- It is a safety issue when placing foster children for day care.
- Prudent Parenting/Normalcy allows foster parents to select their own babysitters.
- Day Care licensing is different. Agencies don't have access to SACWIS, and daycare applications cannot be submitted until foster parents are licensed.
- The suggestion is to put an additional check box on the licensing form to trigger that the foster parent works. The problem is that children move frequently and sometimes providers continue to be paid when a child has moved on and another provider is anticipating payment. It's a matter of bringing entities together.
- Two things he will continue to follow up on: the adoption age range change and the front-end issue about getting applications in and payments on time.
- Doug works with Operations, Procurement and other offices throughout the Department.
- Contact Doug at Douglas.Washington@illinois.gov and Stacy at Stacey.Mixon@illinois.gov
- Contact the Regional Contract Administrator with problems.

School Readiness

MaryBeth Corrigan

MaryBeth introduced herself as the statewide administrator for School Readiness. She said that her office is one of the Department's best kept secrets. Historically, Brian Samuels started an initiative for the education of young children. When he worked for the Feds, he found out that each state needs an agreement with Head Start programs to prioritize our children, placing them at a higher level for acceptance, even if they don't meet all the qualifications. Her team starts right away checking to see if the child age 3-5 is enrolled in a program. They reach out to the workers and go up the chain to ensure that a child is enrolled. If a child is not enrolled, they reach out to the foster parents. Sometimes foster parents want to keep children at home with them rather than putting them in school. Department policy says that we must provide the same quality educational access. They ask the workers to identify the challenge or barrier. Sometimes it's because foster parents are not employed outside the home. If they had early intervention services, they can transition to an educational program. The second approach is to place the child in Head Start. All children are eligible for Head Start and state-funded preschools, regardless of income. There are no caregiver work or school enrollment requirements for Head Start or state-funded preschool programs, but some before/after preschool childcare may require that caregivers work or attend school.

Children between the ages of three and four have the highest number of expulsions when compared to older youth. All programs must track expulsions. They are working on policy and procedures to ensure a transitional plan rather than calling foster parents to say, "Come pick up your child." School Readiness lists programs that expel kids with the Governor's Office. They must thoughtfully determine what actions the program needs to take. Did they call the

caseworker? Did they call Erickson Institute? Did they make all the attempts they could to process a transition plan? The state cannot legislate that programs keep a child, but they can say that they want to see the transition plan

Caregivers need to make sure that foster kids go to school. The state recognizes that there is already an achievement gap for children living in poverty. Kindergarten is rigorous today. If kids are not prepared before going to kindergarten, they may not succeed in future years. Social and emotional needs are met in these programs along with the foster home. Frederick Douglas said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

Staff will help foster parents identify resources for children in care, up to and including a policy waiver. They do not endorse homeschooling for kids, but since the age for kids to have to be in school is seven they do not always weigh in. Children are no longer part of the McKinney/Vento Act for transportation, as our kids are no longer determined to be homeless. IEP's should include the provision of transportation if required.

Contact Information:

Mary Beth Corrigan, Statewide School Readiness Administrator: Mary.Corrigan@illinois.gov, 630-801-3480 (leave a message for a call back)

Martha Cerda Babbington, Cook/Southern Region School Readiness Specialist: Martha.Cerda-Babbington@illinois.gov, 708-338-6630

Vanessa Castro, Northern/Central Region School Readiness Specialist:

Vanessa.Castro@illinois.gov, 847-931-2003

Never send identifying information. Contact and request a call back.

Committee Reports:

CWAC – Rachel Hoyt, Harriet Kersh and Mary Savage – Mary reported that CWAC has been discussing Managed Care and levels of care. The big focus of the past meeting was IlliniCare along with workforce management. They are focusing on recruitment and providing supports for foster parents so they can provide care. Mary noted that the Foster Parent Law regards foster parents as professional team members. A representative has been working with the feds and the pressure is on to provide support to caregivers. There has been a shift in thinking.

Regional Reports

Northern Region – Due to her absence, Rachel Pruess submitted her Northern Region report in advance. She reported the following regional concerns:

1) Safety concerns with Help at Home, i.e. transporters smoking and/or not having enough car seats for the number of children being transported, and/or not having appropriate car seats. The region requests SWFCAC consideration including reviewing job requirements and negotiating expectations of transporters before DCFS prepares for contracts again.

2) Day care rates should be locked in with the daycare prior to adoption.

The council will send these issues to the Policy Committee.

Central Region – Carol reported that a teleconference will be held September 24.

Cook North – No one was in attendance from Cook North.

Cook Central – Arrelda reported that they will meet Tuesday and will go over their Foster Parent Law implementation plan. They are also working on their Christmas Wish List and Arrelda noted that they have some anxious donors who are waiting for outcomes. They are planning upcoming Lifebook workshops.

Cook South – Kellye reported that they held a meeting with an Educational Advocacy update. They worked on their Foster Parent Law implementation plans.

Southern – Mary reported that she was on the call. They gave an update on licensing standards and the region is working with Krista Teckenbrock to help reach out to foster parents from the southern part of the Southern region

Michelle and Carol will meet to determine committee guidelines.

Training Report

Harriet Kersh

Harriet recommended that council members be part of the stakeholder group for the National Training and Development Committee with Bruce Perry. The council consensus was that they would like to move forward.

Public Comment

Concern about transporter training was expressed again by an audience member. Meetings are being conducted and this is being discussed. The council will push this to the Policy Committee.

Stakeholder Comment

None.

MOTION: *Mary Savage made the motion to adjourn. Gladys Boyd seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 2:11 pm.*

Next Meeting: October 4, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza Chicago SW, in Burr Ridge, Illinois.

Potential Agenda Items:

Managed Care

Family First

Committee Breakouts for council goals and outcomes